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## Is a Self Catering Holiday Really a Holiday for Women?

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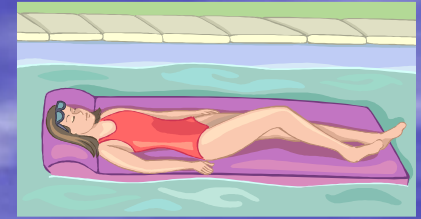
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# **Is a self-catering holiday really a holiday for women? Examining the balance of household responsibilities while on holiday**



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# Gender and Tourism

- Sparse attention to gender in the tourism literature
- Yet it has to be relevant – Swaine (1995)  
Tourism takes place in a socio cultural space where gender matters
- We cannot look at tourists, consumers, entrepreneurs, policy makers and community leaders as inanimate objects



- Pritchard and Morgan (2000) identify 2 main strands of gender and tourism research
  - Economic relationships which characterize female employment
  - Nature of host and guest relationships

- How else does gender matter in tourism?
  - Marketing (Pritchard and Morgan (2000), Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000))
  - Travel behaviour (Collins and Tisdell (2002), Frew and Shaw (1999))
  - Motivations (McGhee et al (1996) Freysinger (1995))
  - Entrepreneurship (Lynch, (2005), Mottiar and Walsh (2007))
  - Decision making within households (Cosenza and Davis (1981), Madrigal et al (1992) Mottiar and Quinn (2004))



# Division of roles and responsibilities within a household

- Women are more responsible for household and child minding chores
  - Women spend at least twice as much time as men on housework (UN, 2010)
  - In the UK women spend double the amount of time as men daily on domestic work
  - In Australia women do 2/3rds of the housework
- Women can be happy to accept this role – Beagan et al (2008) and KJawamura and Brown (2010)
- Do these roles and responsibilities change when on holidays?

# What is a holiday?

- Tourists motivations
  - Biggest motivation is 'change and escape' (Gilbert, (1992) Dann (1981) McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie (1995))
- Time use surveys show that 2/3rds of peoples time is spent travelling, preparing food, domestic work and personal care
- So how is a self-catering holiday escaping everyday life?



# Research Questions



- Do people on self-catering holidays escape everyday household chores?
- Do couple roles and responsibilities change when they are on holiday?
- Are more roles and responsibilities shared when on holiday?
- Are roles and responsibilities exchanged so that there is escapism for each party?



# Sample

- 145 respondents
- 61% female
- 66% had children
- 87% worked outside the home
- 87% aged between 25 and 65
- 63% travelled to Europe and 21% in Ireland
- 85% stayed 1-2 weeks
- 41% stayed in rented apt/mobile/ caravan 27% in rented house and 16% in own holiday home

# Findings

- 1. 'Escapsim' is reflected in a change in the household work done while on holidays
- All say that they do less in almost every category when on holiday





# Percentage of all respondents who:

	At home	On holiday
Clean the house	41	26
Cook the food	42	30
Decide what is for dinner	40	24
Make decisions re. grocery shop	41	19
Do the grocery shop	41	14

	At home	On holiday
Manage the household budget	30	25
Mind the children	14	4
Wash the clothes	46	37
Iron the clothes	38	23
Clean the bathroom	49	33

So holidays are an escape from domestic work

2. Is there a gender divide in terms of division of responsibilities at home?



# Proportion of female respondent who solely or mostly do the following at home:

Clean the house	63
Cook the food	59
Decide what is for dinner	59
Make decisions re. grocery shop	70
Do the grocery shop	58

Manage the budget	33
Mind the children	14
Wash the clothes	46
Iron the clothes	38
Clean the bathroom	49

- There is a very clear gender divide with women doing most of the domestic work
- 3. Does this change when on holiday?



# Proportion of females who do the following when:

	At home	On holiday
Clean the house	63	37
Cook the food	59	36
Decide what is for dinner	59	29
Make decisions re. grocery shop	70	26
Do the grocery shop	58	16

	At home	On holiday
Manage the budget	33	19
Mind the children	18	7
Wash the clothes	70	53
Iron the clothes	55	36
Clean the bathroom	70	46

- Overall women are doing less domestic work while on holiday
- 4. So is it their male partners who are now doing taking over these roles?



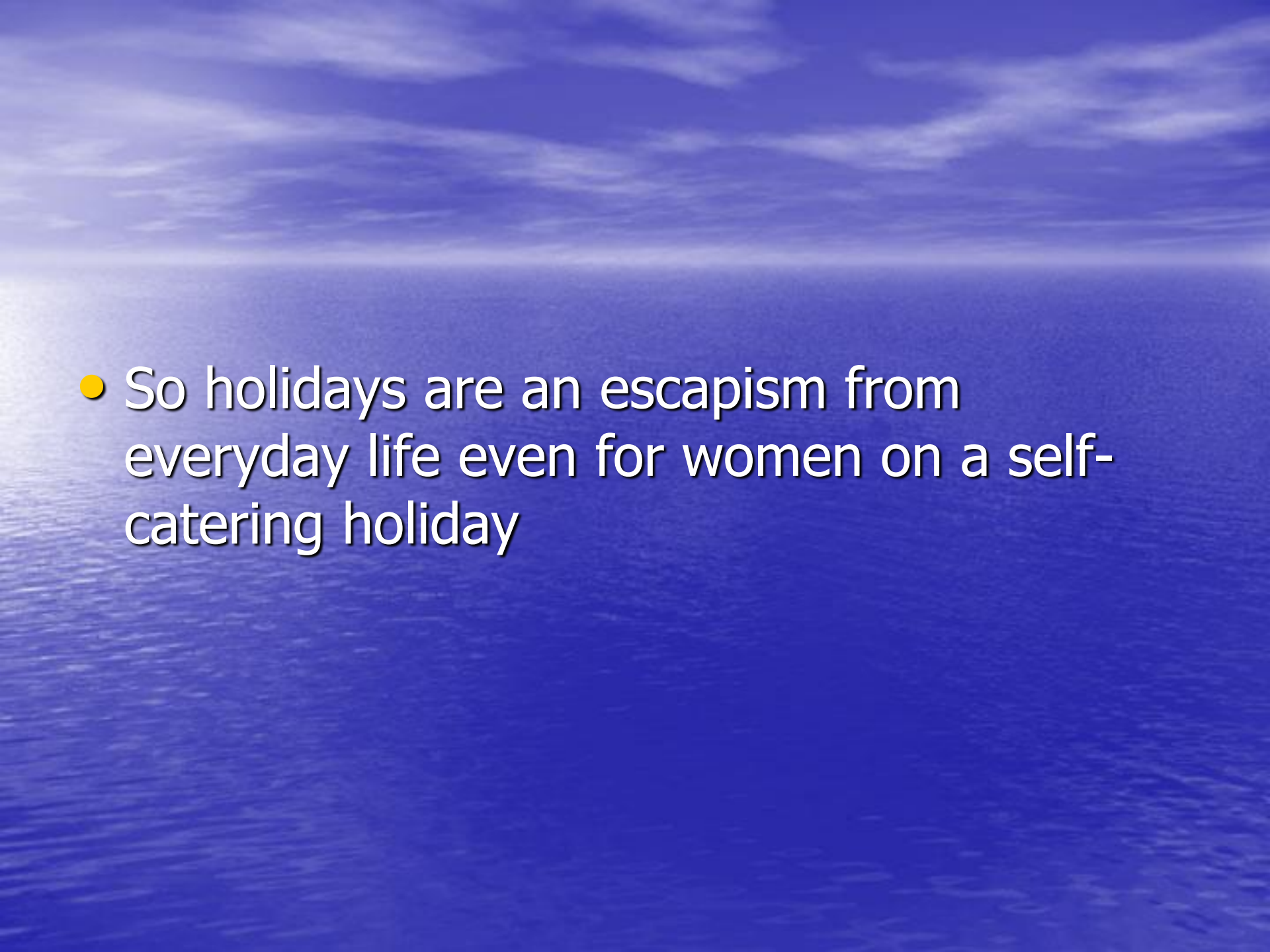
# When on holiday who does (or mostly does) the following?

	Female	Male	Both	Neither
Cleans the house	37	1	36	25
Cooks the food	36	10	26	28
Decides what is for dinner	29	6	53	12
Makes decision re. grocery purchase	26	5	61	8
Does the grocery shopping	16	8	66	11
Manages the budget	19	23	57	1

	Female	Male	Both	Neither
Minds the children	7	2	64	28
Washes the clothes	53	4	13	29
Irons the clothes	36	4	10	51
Cleans the bathroom	45	5	22	28



- So it isn't that roles are reversed while on holidays but that the responsibilities are shared and done together or they are not done at all
- This finding is supported by the fact that 80% of respondents agreed with the statement 'on holidays I feel like we share the household chores'
- Yet only 36% 'feel like my role in the family is different' and only 45% feel that 'on holidays my relationship with my partner is quite different than it is when we are at home'.

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- So holidays are an escapism from everyday life even for women on a self-catering holiday



- It should be noted though that a significant proportion of women continue to be primarily responsible for domestic jobs while on holiday

# What are the key findings of this research?

- It appears that holidays do result in a shift in gender roles within families re. household chores
  - Some jobs are not done on holiday e.g. ironing
  - More jobs are shared and done together e.g. cleaning the house, deciding what is for dinner, doing grocery shopping, managing the budget and minding children
- But some remain women's jobs – cooking food, washing clothes & cleaning the bathroom



# **What are the implications of these findings?**

- From a sociological perspective it adds to the debate about gender and household responsibilities
- It adds to our discussion about to what extent holidays are always an 'escape' from the everyday
- It provides another avenue of research for gender and tourism research

# Further avenues of research

- Focus groups/in depth interviews
- How do women feel about how household responsibilities are shared when at home and when on holiday?
- Are women happy with the division of labour on holidays?
- Does the concept of sharing some jobs mean that they don't mind doing others alone?
- How do women and men view household chores while on holidays?